



2009 H1N1 Flu: Vaccination

VACCINATION IS THE BEST PROTECTION AGAINST GETTING AND SPREADING THE FLU. There are vaccines available this year to prevent seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu. The seasonal flu vaccine will not protect you against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.

Certain people are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu infection or related complications, or have close contacts with infants who are too young to be vaccinated. These people are recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine as soon as it is available.

People recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine first are:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with, or care for, infants younger than 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency medical personnel
- Anyone from 6 months through 24 years of age
- Anyone from 25 through 64 years of age with certain chronic medical conditions or a weakened immune system

After demand for vaccine among the above people has been met, these people should also be offered vaccine:

- Healthy adults 25 through 64 years old
- Adults 65 years and older

Note: Be sure to tell the person giving you the vaccine if you have an allergy to eggs, other severe allergies, or a medical condition. These may not be reasons to avoid the vaccine, but the medical staff can help you decide.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF 2009 H1N1 VACCINES BEING PRODUCED: a 2009 H1N1 "flu shot" that is given with a needle, usually in the arm; and the 2009 H1N1 "nasal spray" flu vaccine, which is sprayed into the nose. While anyone 6 months of age or older can receive the shot, the nasal spray vaccine (LAIV) is for healthy persons 2-49 years old who are not pregnant. Ask the person giving the vaccination if the nasal spray is right for you. Whichever type of vaccine is used, children age 9 years and younger should get two doses of vaccine about a month apart. Older children and adults need only one dose.

FLU VACCINES HAVE A VERY GOOD SAFETY TRACK RECORD. The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine is expected to have a similar safety profile as seasonal flu vaccines, which have a very good safety record. Over the years, hundreds of millions of seasonal flu vaccines have been given, and serious problems are rare.

PEOPLE WHO ARE AT HIGH RISK FOR FLU COMPLICATIONS SHOULD ALSO RECEIVE A PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINATION. Pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccination is recommended for seniors, and people age 2 and older who have chronic illnesses, weakened immune systems, or asthma. Usually only one dose of pneumococcal vaccine is required for adults, but under some circumstances, a second dose may be needed 5 years after the first.